



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

BOOK REVIEWS.

WHAT IS CHRISTIANITY? Sixteen Lectures Delivered in the University of Berlin During the Winter Term 1899-1900. By *Adolf Harnack*. Translated into English by Thomas Bailey Saunders. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1901. Pages, 301.

In the very brief preface to the English edition of these remarkable Lectures Professor Harnack declares that "the theologians of every country only half discharge their duties if they think it enough to treat of the Gospel in the recondite language of learning and bury it in scholarly folios." As all who are acquainted with the theological literature of our time are aware, he is himself equalled by few and surpassed by none in extent and variety of erudition, in accuracy, in wide view and comprehensive grasp. His *History of Dogma*, which in the very year of its completion not only became the standard work on the subject but also displaced all others, is a monument of patient scholarship which might well have formed the labor of a lifetime. Yet this is only one of his great achievements as a scholar. But Professor Harnack is more than a scholar and a critic. He is a man of deep religious enthusiasm. He is a personality rich in moral influence. He is also an orator able to rivet the attention whether of an academic or of a popular audience. When, therefore, he announced that he would deliver a series of lectures on the essential features of the Christian religion and the developments which it has exhibited in the course of history, and that the lectures would be open to students in any faculty, he attracted a class such as has probably never been seen in Berlin since the days when Fichte made his great speeches to the German nation. Not only did students of theology, history, and literature attend, but young lawyers, doctors, surgeons, and candidates for official appointments as well. That so large and so miscellaneous an audience should have assembled to hear a series of lectures on Christianity given outside the regular programme of study and bearing no relation to any examinations, is a fact which will be fully appreciated only by those who know what the conditions of life are amongst the undergraduates in a modern university.

The theme of these lectures is simple: "What is Christianity? What was it? What has it become?" Professor Harnack declines to treat Christianity from

the point of view of the apologist or the religious philosopher ; apologetics, he says, even if a discipline better developed than it is, has nothing to do with the purely historical question which he proposes to answer ; nor has speculative reasoning as to the content of the several conceptions of religion. His aim is to examine Christianity as it was in its origin and as it was transformed in the march of the centuries. He tells us that we must look not only at Jesus Christ and his Gospel but also at "the reflexion and the effects which he produced in those whose leader and master he became." "The more powerful the personality which a man possesses, and the more he takes hold of the inner life of others, the less can the sum total of what he is be known only by what he himself says and does." Nor is this all. We must go further ; we must trace the meaning and destiny of the Gospel as unfolded in time, in the conviction that it is not identical with the shape which it took at first but "contains something which, under differing historical forms, is of permanent validity."

To give in a brief space any adequate account of Professor Harnack's presentation of the Gospel as enunciated by Jesus Christ, both in regard to its leading features and in its relation to certain general problems of life and civilisation, and then of his masterly exposition of the destiny of the Gospel in the apostolic age, in Catholicism, Greek and Roman, and in Protestantism, is quite impossible. All that can be done here is to indicate the bare results at which he arrives. He is well aware of the general criticism that what Jesus Christ proclaimed had been proclaimed before, and he frankly admits, with Wellhausen, that the Gospel was also to be found in the prophets and even in the Jewish tradition of the time. "What, then, was there that was new?" he asks.

"The question is out of place in monotheistic religion. Ask rather : 'Had what was here proclaimed any strength and any vigor ?' I answer : Take the people of Israel and search the whole history of their religion ; take history generally, and where will you find any message about God and the good that was ever so pure and so full of strength—for purity and strength go together—as we hear and read of in the Gospels ? As regards purity, the spring of holiness had, indeed, long been opened ; but it was choked with sand and dirt, and its water was polluted. For rabbis and theologians to come afterwards and distil this water, even if they were successful, makes no difference. But now the spring burst forth afresh, and broke a new way for itself through the rubbish—through the rubbish which priests and theologians had heaped up so as to smother the true element in religion ; for how often does it happen in history that theology is only the instrument by which religion is discarded ! The other element was that of strength. Pharisaical teachers had proclaimed that everything was contained in the injunction to love God and one's neighbor. They spoke excellently ; the words might have come out of Jesus's mouth. But what was the result of their language ? That the nation, that in particular their own pupils, condemned the man who took the words seriously. All that they did was weak and, because weak, harmful. Words effect nothing ; it is

the power of the personality that stands behind them. But he 'thought as one having authority and not as the Scribes.' Such was the impression of him which his disciples received. His words became to them 'the words of life,' seeds which sprang up and bore fruit. That was what was new." (Pp. 47-49.)

He sums up Jesus Christ's teaching under the three heads: the kingdom of God and its coming, God the Father and the infinite value of the human soul, and the commandment of love; and he shows how that teaching is contained in its entirety in each of the three. Nor is it difficult to conclude that in Professor Harnack's view the Fatherhood of God is the fundamental thought at the centre of Christianity, and that the "kingdom" is ultimately, as he says, "the treasure which the soul possesses in the eternal and merciful God." He deals, too, in a very striking, frank and original way with the application of this teaching to such questions as asceticism, the burden of poverty and distress, public order and civilisation. The point of view which he inculcates is nowhere better stated than on pages 115 and 116:

"The Gospel makes its appeal to the inner man, who, whether he is well or wounded, in a happy position or a miserable, obliged to spend his earthly life fighting or quietly maintaining what he has won, always remains the same. 'My kingdom is not of this world'; it is no earthly kingdom that the Gospel establishes. These words not only exclude such a political theocracy as the Pope aims at setting up and all worldly dominion; they have a much wider range. Negatively they forbid all direct and formal interference of religion in worldly affairs. Positively what the Gospel says is this: Whoever you may be, and whatever your position, whether bondman or free, whether fighting or at rest—your real task in life is always the same. There is only *one* relation and *one* idea which you must not violate, and in the face of which all others are only transient wrappings and vain show: to be a child of God and a citizen of His kingdom, and to exercise love. How you are to maintain yourself in this life on earth, and in what way you are to serve your neighbor, is left to you and your own liberty of action. This is what the apostle Paul understood by the Gospel, and I do not believe that he misunderstood it. Then let us fight, let us struggle, let us get justice for the oppressed, let us order the circumstances of the world as we with a clear conscience can, and as we may think best for our neighbor; but do not let us expect the Gospel to afford us any direct help; let us make no selfish demands for ourselves; and let us not forget that the world passes away, not only with the lusts thereof, but also with its regulations and its goods! Once more be it said: the Gospel knows only one goal, one idea; and it demands of a man that he shall never put them aside. If the exhortation to renounce takes, in a harsh and onesided way, a foremost place in Jesus's words, we must be careful to keep before our eyes the paramount and exclusive claims of the relation to God and the idea of love. The Gospel is above all questions of mundane development; it is concerned not with material things but with the souls of men."

Professor Harnack's treatment of the questions involved in the titles "Son of God" and "Messiah" as applied to Jesus Christ and of the belief in his Resurrection is eminently characteristic of the historian anxious to extract from the creeds whatever of value they may contain. The consciousness which Jesus Christ possessed of being the Son of God is, he asserts, nothing but "the practical consequence of knowing God as the Father and as his Father," and it was, he continues, closely connected with the historic idea of a Messiah which he took up and transformed. But at the same time he indicates his own view with sufficient plainness by declaring, with emphasis, that "*the Gospel, as Jesus proclaimed it, has to do with the Father only and not with the Son.*" This, he says, is "the simple expression of the actual fact as the evangelists give it." In answer to the objection that the Gospel is an antiquated belief which can have no further significance for us, he dwells with much eloquence on its "timeless" character, its relation to the inner man.

"I do not know how our increased knowledge of nature is to hinder us from bearing witness to the truth of the creed that 'The world passeth away, and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.' We have to do with a dualism which arose we know not how; but as moral beings we are convinced that, as it has been given us in order that we may overcome it in ourselves and bring it to a unity, so also it goes back to an original unity, and will at last find its reconciliation in the great far-off event, the realised dominion of the Good."

We now pass to the development of Christianity in the apostolic age. Paul's work in transforming the simple faith in the Fatherhood of God into a universal religion and in laying the foundations of a great Church is skilfully described. In this view Paul emerges once again as "the missionary, the teacher, the schoolmaster, the organiser." Of this transformation Catholicism was the inevitable result, more particularly after the struggle with the gnostic movement made it necessary for the Church to close up its ranks and define its boundaries if it was to survive and do its work. But with the transformation came a change that was not without many disadvantages. The acute phase of Hellenisation with which the Church was threatened may, indeed, have been avoided, but the idea began to make itself felt that "religion is first and foremost doctrine, and doctrine, too, that is coextensive with the whole range of knowledge." Other formal elements made their appearance, and alien accretions began to disfigure and disguise the original enthusiasm. The form which Catholicism assumed in the Greek Church was, says Professor Harnack, "not a Christian product in a Greek dress, but a Greek product in a Christian dress"; that is to say, it was simply the continuation of the old Greek religion under the influence of the new ideas. Christianity became a cult. Traditionalism, intellectualism, and ritualism are the fundamental notes of a Church in which "doctrine comes to be administered in stereotyped formulas accompanied by symbolic acts"; the sort of religion, as we are reminded, "to abolish which Jesus Christ suffered himself to be nailed to the cross." When Christianity in the

West took shape as the Roman Church, a structure arose "the most comprehensive and the vastest, the most complicated and yet at the same time the most uniform, that history has produced." Of the three characteristics of the Church—the Catholicism which it shares with its Greek sister, the spirit of the Roman Empire, and the religious fervor of St. Augustine, the second is incomparably the most striking to the outward eye. "The Roman Church," says Professor Harnack, "privily pushed itself into the position of the Roman World-Empire"; the Pope is Pontifex Maximus and the successor of the Cæsars. This, he continues, is the true state of the matter historically, and the most fruitful way of describing the character of the Roman Church. "It still governs the nations; its popes rule like Trajan and Marcus Aurelius; Peter and Paul have taken the place of Romulus and Remus; the bishops and archbishops, of the proconsuls; the troops of priests and monks correspond to the legions; the Jesuits to the imperial body-guard."

In the two concluding lectures Protestantism is treated not only as a reformation but also as a revolution. In both aspects what was involved, we are told, was "*a critical reduction to principles*," a return to Christianity as the word of God and the power of faith; and this return meant a protest against the whole system of legal ordinance with which the Roman Church had overlaid and obscured the Gospel. But Professor Harnack is not blind to the faults of Protestantism. "We get nothing," he says, "from history without paying for it, and for a violent movement we have to pay double." Protestantism destroyed the unity of Western civilisation. The system of State-Churches which it encouraged has many disadvantages. In laying exclusive emphasis upon faith alone, it produced some want of serious purpose in the conduct of life. Nor was Protestantism able to perceive all the conclusions to which it naturally led, much less to give them effect. The consequence was that Luther bound himself to much that cannot be otherwise described than as a variety of that intellectualism which characterised the Schoolmen. These defects have come home to the Evangelical Churches, and in our own day Protestantism is threatened by three most powerful forces—the indifference of the masses, the tendency to regard religion as a mere adjunct to life, an æsthetic consolation, and the pressure of the State view that the Churches are institutions of public utility. Against these forces what is wanted is "to maintain Christian earnestness and liberty as presented in the Gospel."

No part of this exposition of Christianity in its origin and its history is so expressive and significant as the words with which Professor Harnack brings his lectures to a conclusion. They contain a personal touch which shows us in what light the lecturer himself regards some of the obvious difficulties and perplexities of his task. Critics have complained that he leaves them much in doubt as to the views which he entertains on certain mysterious doctrines of the Christian religion. Let his own words answer them:

"Gentlemen, it is religion, the love of God and neighbor, which gives life a meaning; knowledge cannot do it. Let me, if you please, speak of my own expe-

rience, as one who for thirty years has taken an earnest interest in these things. Pure knowledge is a glorious thing, and woe to the man who holds it light or blunts his sense for it. But to the question, Whence, whither, and to what purpose, it gives an answer to-day as little as it did two or three thousand years ago. It does, indeed, instruct us in facts; it detects inconsistencies; it links phenomena; it corrects the deceptions of sense and idea. But where and how the curve of the world and the curve of our own life begin—that curve of which it shows us only a section—and whither this curve leads, knowledge does not tell us. But if with a steady will we affirm the forces and the standards which on the summits of our inner life shine out as our highest good, nay, as our real self; if we are earnest and courageous enough to accept them as the great Reality and direct our lives by them; and if we then look at the course of mankind's history, follow its upward development, and search, in strenuous and patient service, for the communion of minds in it, we shall not faint in weariness and despair, but become certain of God, of the God whom Jesus Christ called his Father, and who is also our Father."

Much praise is due to the translator of this work for the admirable manner in which he has performed his difficult task. But Mr. Saunders has only confirmed here the high reputation which he gained by his idiomatic translations of Schopenhauer's essays.

T.

A HISTORY OF BABYLONIA AND ASSYRIA. By *Robert William Rogers*, Ph. D. (Leipzig), D. D., LL. D., F. R. G. S., Professor in Drew Theological Seminary, Madison, New Jersey. New York: Eaton and Mains. Cincinnati: Jennings & Pye. 1901. 2 Volumes. Vol. I., pages 429; Vol. II., pages 418. Price, \$5.00.

The story of the discovery of the history and literature of Assyria and Babylonia as narrated in these two volumes by Dr. Rogers is as fascinating as any novel. Prior to 1820, the only knowledge the world possessed of Babylon and Nineveh was derived entirely from extraneous sources, Greek, Latin, Biblical, etc.; Babylon and Nineveh themselves had always preserved the silence of the grave.

Since that year, however, great libraries have been unearthed from the ancient sites of these cities, telling of their history, their science, their architecture, their jurisprudence, their religion, and their ethics, all written in an absolutely unknown language, which it remained for scholars to decipher. It is interesting to observe that the restoration of the life of Babylonia and Assyria and the decipherment of the cuneiform script of the Babylonians and Assyrians did not begin in connexion with Babylonia and Nineveh themselves, but took their origin in a far distant spot in Persia, in the ruins of Persepolis, the ancient capital of the Persian kings. These ruins the very earliest travellers had admired, and incidentally had discovered certain curious inscriptions written in wedge-shaped, arrow-headed characters. The first step in the decipherment of these inscriptions was taken in 1621 in a guess